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AUTHOR Anderson, Christine E.
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ABSTRACT

The Intergovernmental Personnel Act Program (IPA), begun in 1971, provides for the temporary exchange of personnel between federal executive agencies and states, local governments, institutions of higher education, and Indian tribal governments to do work of mutual benefit and concern. In the five years following the program's inception, more than 3,000 mobility assignments were made. Forty major federal agencies, all 50 states, nearly 300 local governments, and more than 328 colleges and universities utilized the program. The program's participants represented a variety of occupations and specialities with the most frequent assignments being made in the areas of general executive management, science and technology, education, social science, business, law, engineering, and architecture. In 1976, the federal agency most frequently using the IPA was the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare with 236 of the total of 829 participants. Testimonials of community college personnel participating in the program are presented. Eligibility for participation, salary and supervision considerations, duration of appointment, documentation of assignment conditions and responsibilities, allowances for travel and moving expenses, and procedures for termination of assignment are discussed. A list of IPA Division Chiefs for United States Civil Service Commission Regions is also included. (MB)

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RESOURCE PAPER NO. 13

# THE IPA - AN OPPORTUNITY FOR INTERGOVERNMENTAL UNDERSTANDING

By

Dr. Christine E. Anderson
Resource Development Specialist
Miami-Dade Community College
Miami, Florida

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NCRD
National Council for Resource Development Suite 410 One Dupont Circle, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036
An Affiliate Council of The American Association of Community and Junior Colleges

## THE IPA - AN OPPORTUNITY FOR INTERGOVERNMENTAL UNDERSTANDING

As the Federal Government reaches the point of ever-increasing influence and control over the operations of institutions of higher education in this country, the problem faced by many college administrators is how to deal with the federal monolith effectively. A significant part of effectively dealing with the Federal Government is first grasping the complexities of federal operations, understanding how the huge parts fit together and what makes them move. One way of getting this important understanding is to take advantage of a government-sponsored program called the Intergovernmental Personnel Act Program, or IPA, as it is commonly known in government jargon. This program has utility for college administrators at a variety of levels, but for resource development personnel in particular.

Title IV of the Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1971 (Public Law 91-648) authorizes the temporary exchange of personnel between federal executive agencies to or from states, local governments, institutions of higher education, and Indian tribal governments to do work of mutual benefit and concern. As the Act's introduction states, this program is designed:

> To reinforce the federal system by strengthening the personnel resources of State and local governments (and institutions of higher education), to improve intergovernmental cooperation in the administration of grant-in-aid programs, to provide grants for improvement of personnel administration, to authorize Federal assistance in training State and local employees, to provide grants to State and local governments for training of their employees, to authorize interstate compacts for personnel and training activities, to facilitate the temporary assignment of personnel between the Federal Government and State and local governments, (institutions of higher education) and for other purposes.[1]

In the five years of the program's operation, more than 3,000 mobility assignments have been made. Forty major federal agencies, all 50 states, nearly 300 local governments and more than 328 colleges and universities have utilized the program. The program's participants represent a variety of occupations and specialities broad enough to meet the needs of government at all levels, with the most frequent assignments being made in the areas of general executive management, science and technology, education, social science, business, law, engineering, and architecture. Assignments have run the gamut from pollution to the Bicentennial and are frequently made to help implement new federal legislation.

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[1] The Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1971, Public Law 91-648, Introduction.

As you may gather from the language of the Act, this is also a grant program for the training of State and local government personnel. The money is administered at the State level, via a statewide plan, and college and universities can be subcontractors to provide this training.

In FY 76, the federal agency most frequently utilizing the IPA was the Department of Health, Education and Welfare with 236 participants. Although forty federal agencies have participated in the program, two-thirds of the assignments have been made by the agencies listed below as follows:

| AGENCY | NO. OF ASSIGNMENTS IN FY 76 | TOTAL ASSIGNMENTS (Since May, 1971) |
|---|---|---|
| Health, Education and Welfare | 236 | 549 |
| Agriculture | 91 | 469 |
| Labor | 65 | 333 |
| Housing and Urban Development | 50 | 330 |
| Environmental Protection Agency | 101 | 281 |

In addition to these participants, the following data hold throughout the agencies:

Total Assignments

829 assignments in FY 76
3,164 assignments since the program began in May of 1971

Distribution of Assignments

| From Federal Agencies | In FY 76 | (Cumulative) Since May, 1971 |
|---|---|---|
| To States | 116 | 750 |
| Units of Local Government | 105 | 548 |
| Institutions of Higher Education | 71 | 298 |
| Indian Tribal Governments | 10 | 28 |
| TOTALS | 302 | 1,624 |

| To Federal Agencies | In FY 76 | Since May, 1971 |
|---|---|---|
| From States | 89 | 352 |
| Units of Local Government | 42 | 136 |
| Institutions of Higher Education | 394 | 1,050 |
| Indian Tribal Governments | 2 | 2 |
| TOTALS | 527 | 1,540 |

This extensive use of the program supports its rationale--that in many cases there is valuable expertise which may be of assistance at another operational level, and that there should be a mutual sharing of the talent pool among levels of government, and the talent "bank" that exists at institutions of higher education. College administrators can participate either by going to a federal agency or by receiving a federal person on their campus for a length of time. In some cases, a simple exchange can be arranged. The benefits to be derived from the program are multiple but are especially evident in the areas of:

1. Strengthening intergovernmental relationships.
2. Improving community college visibility at the federal level.
3. Promoting philosophical interaction.
4. Information sharing.

5. Serving as a locus of contacts.
6. Improving management.
7. Learning how to deal effectively with one another.
8. Sharing perceptions and expertise.
9. Understanding each other's priorities and objectives.
10. Improving professional potential.

If I might address the benefits directly from my own experiences at the Administration on Aging in HEW, as a person coming to the assignment from Miami-Dade Community College, with a resource development/administrative background, I can recommend the experience wholeheartedly. The intergovernmental exchange for me has meant that I have participated in a grant-making agency's operations from the other side of the table--from the grantor's point of view. This has caused me to gain a series of insights into how a grant-making agency makes its awards, who gets them, why, and what considerations come into play throughout the whole process. In addition, I've been able to use my time in Washington to make contacts throughout the federal agencies, on the Hill, and in our own constituency at a variety of levels. To gain this type of direct experience with federalism has been one of the most profound experiences of my adult life professionally and, I might add, personally as well.

Thelma Dudley, who spent ninety days at the Community College Unit in Washington and who has now returned to Valencia Community College has also found the experience to be a positive one. She says that her IPA has "a good experience which enabled me to learn the community college philosophy overall and allowed me the opportunity to study intensively how Title III grants are put together. Additionally, it allowed me to meet community college presidents, deans and other personnel who came to seek the advice of Dr. Marie Martin in solving their problems."

Stan Patterson at the Community College Unit in Washington who went on an IPA to the State University of New York to help develop a cooperative education program, says that the IPA is "one of the simplest and most effective programs for providing technical assistance that the government has, provided that both the user agency and the employer agency communicate effectively at the outset."

Cheryl Opacinch is on IPA under ACE auspices from Catonsville Community College to HEW's Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. About her experiences in Washington, Cheryl says, "My position here proved an opportunity to participate in planning at the macro-level, to learn new strategies in policy analysis, to work with different planning systems, to discover what kinds of information are most influential in policy development and to identify where in the federal policy-making chain we at the community college can have most impact."

Bill Aldridge, currently on IPA to the National Science Foundation from the St. Louis Community College District says that he would "encourage people to come to the program, as the experience gained in understanding governmental operations is profound. I am treated exactly as any other program officer here at NSF, and thus, I have an opportunity to experience the whole grant-making and review process in depth."

Mal Goldberg, also at NSF on IPA from Westchester Community College, finds the experience "extremely positive and beneficial personally and from the point of view of the Foundation. In addition, my college will benefit from the knowledge that I have acquired, having an overview of government processes, and a specific knowledge of science education especially as it is viewed by NSF."

These testimonials serve to document the efficacy of the Intergovernmental Personnel Act Program. If as a college administrator you would like to get such an assignment, there are certain issues that should be considered in negotiating the best arrangement possible. Noteworthy, too, is the fact that in addition to personnel at institutions of higher education who participate in the program directly, higher education and other organizations sponsor IPA's in federal agencies and give administrative recognition to their participants by virtue of their organizational involvement. Some of the organizations that currently participate in the program are:

1. The American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business
2. The Brookings Institution
3. The National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration
4. The American Council on Education.

Whether the IPA placement is handled by an administrative organization or is negotiated directly with an agency, these considerations should be taken into account:

1. Eligibility

   Personnel at public or private four-year colleges or universities or technical or junior colleges can come to a federal agency.

   Federal career employees of departments and agencies in the executive branch, government corporations, and the General Accounting Office can go to an institution of higher education, State or local government or Indian tribe.

2. Salary and Supervision

   The salary and supervision considerations of a person on IPA assignments are matters for negotiation between the two organizations concerned both in total amount of salary and costs borne by each organization. The Intergovernmental Personnel Act expressly states that:

   > The supervision of the duties of such an employee may be governed by agreement between the executive agency and the State or local government or (college or university) concerned. A detail of a State or local government (or college) employee to an executive agency may be made with or without reimbursement by the executive agency for the pay, or a part thereof, of the employee during the period of assignment.[2]

Theoretically, this means that the federal agency (or the institution of higher education) can pay 100% of the salary of the person on the IPA. Realistically, the program has supported approximately 85% of the expenses of an academic person to an agency, and 50% of the expenses of a federal employee on IPA. The monies for an agency's support appear as a line item in its budget.

In most cases, the academic person who comes to a federal agency has his

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[2] Ibid., Title IV.

checks cut by his institution of higher education and the institution is then reimbursed for the portion of the salary being picked up by the agency. This leaves retirement, tenure, calendar and other benefits intact and can have some very positive tax benefits as well.

Supervision is also a matter for negotiation but can coincide with the percentage of salary being paid by each organization.

3. Duration

The assignments may last from a few weeks to two years, with option for renewal. Assignments may also be made on a part-time or intermittent basis.

4. Documentation

Once the two organizations have agreed upon an assignment and all of the terms and conditions of it, it is put into effect by a written agreement which serves to:

a. Document the terms and conditions of the assignment that the two agencies have agreed upon;

b. Document the employee's consent to the assignment by his or her signature; and

c. Provide a record of the rights and responsibilities of each of the three parties to the agreement.

5. Travel and moving expenses

Appropriations of the executive agency are available to pay:

a. Travel, including a per diem allowance, to and from the assignment location;

b. A per diem allowance at the assignment location during the period of the assignment;

c. Travel, including a per diem allowance, while traveling on official business away from his designated post of duty during the assignment when the head of the executive agency considers the travel in the interest of the United States;

d. The expenses of transportation of his immediate family and of his household goods and personal effects to and from the assignment location;

e. The expenses of per diem allowances for the immediate family of the employee to and from the assignment location;

f. For subsistence of the employee and his immediate family while occupying temporary quarters at the assignment location and on return to his former post of duty; and

g. The expenses of nontemporary storage of household goods and personal effects in connection with assignment at an isolated location, provided that the employer agrees in writing to complete the entire period of his assignment or one year, whichever is shorter, unless separated or reassigned for reasons beyond his control and acceptable to the agency considered.[3]

6. Termination

An assignment may be terminated before the date it is scheduled to end at the request of the executive agency or the institution of higher education concerned.

It is my hope that this paper has interested enough people in the field of college administration to inquire of the federal agencies with whom they deal about the possibility of participating in the Intergovernmental Personnel Act Program. The flexibility of the program and the in-depth look at the Federal Government it provides, makes it a worthwhile experience to all parties concerned.

For further information on the Intergovernmental Personnel Act Program, contact Andrew W. Boesel, Director, Office of Faculty Fellows and Personnel Mobility, Bureau of Intergovernmental Personnel Programs, U.S. Civil Service Commission, 1900 E Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20415, phone: (202) 254-7316, or your regional office as listed on the following page.

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[3] A note of caution about travel benefits is to make sure that the agency cites the allowances in detail by item! Or, request a copy of Chapter 3-60 of the Federal Travel Manual, "Civilian Employee Relocation Expenses." There are certain allowable limits on these categories, and if you go over them, the expenses will not be reimbursed to you!

## UNITED STATES CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION REGIONS

Intergovernmental Personnel Programs Divisions

| Region | IPA Division Chiefs | |
|---|---|---|
| Atlanta | 1340 Spring Street, N.W.<br>Atlanta, Georgia 30309<br>(404) 526-2448 | Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee |
| Boston | John W. McMormack<br>Post Office and Courthouse<br>Boston, Massachusetts 02109<br>(617) 223-6835 | Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont |
| Chicago | Federal Office Building<br>29th Floor<br>230 South Dearborn Street<br>Chicago, Illinois 60604<br>(312) 353-5263 | Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin |
| Dallas | 1100 Commerce Street<br>Dallas, Texas 75202<br>(214) 749-1907 | Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico |
| Denver | Building 20<br>Denver Federal Center<br>Denver, Colorado 80225<br>(303) 234-4047 | Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming |
| New York | Federal Building<br>26 Federal Plaza<br>New York, New York 10007<br>(212) 264-4612 | New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands |
| Philadelphia | William J. Green, Jr.<br>Federal Building<br>600 Arch Street<br>Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106<br>(215) 597-9125 | Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia |
| St. Louis | 1256 Federal Building<br>1520 Market Street<br>St. Louis, Missouri 63103<br>(314) 425-4941 | Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska |
| San Francisco | Federal Building, Box 36010<br>450 Golden Gate Avenue<br>San Francisco, California 94102<br>(415) 556-1190 | Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Guam, American Samoa |
| Seattle | Federal Building, 26th Floor<br>915 Second Avenue<br>Seattle, Washington 98174<br>(206) 442-0464 | Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, Washington |